



March 11, 2026,

The Honorable Brian Feldman, Chair,
Education, Energy, and Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy, and Environment Committee,

The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) supports Senate Bill 478. This legislation expands access to dual enrollment opportunities in Washington County by allowing nonpublic school and homeschooled students to participate in these programs alongside their public school peers.

Dual enrollment programs are an important pathway for students to begin earning college credit while still completing their secondary education. These programs help students accelerate their academic progress, reduce the cost of obtaining a degree, and build confidence in their ability to succeed in a postsecondary environment. Expanding eligibility ensures that more students, regardless of their educational setting, have access to these opportunities.

Students across Washington County pursue their education through a variety of instructional models, including public schools, private schools, and homeschool programs. Senate Bill 478 recognizes these diverse pathways and ensures that all qualified students have the opportunity to participate in dual enrollment programs offered by local institutions of higher education.

Providing early exposure to college-level coursework can strengthen college readiness, encourage continued educational attainment, and support the development of a skilled workforce in the region. By expanding participation in dual enrollment programs, this legislation aligns with Maryland's broader goals of increasing access to higher education and strengthening the state's talent pipeline.

I respectfully urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 478.

Yours in Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S K Rai".

Secretary Sanjay Rai
Maryland Higher Education Commission